WHIRRAKEE

June 2009 Vol. 30 No. 5

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO

FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.
Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552
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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The meeting starts with a 10 minute thing-of-the night natural history segment. The invited speaker starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper. The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearer listed above and the following members: Bob Ruddick, Ben Goonan, Liz Graham, Diana Collier. *More committee members are urgently sought, see page 3.*

Excursions are conducted regularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. Several interclub field naturalist campouts are held every year.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one sub-group (the Fauna Study Group) and is actively involved in local conservation issues. An **indigenous garden** has been established around the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building. Working bees are advertised on the *Whirrakee* diary page.

Fauna Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Bird Observing: Club members conduct regular bird surveys. Please contact Anne Bridley 5449 3479 or Glenise Moors 5439 6254 for details. Special bird observations should be reported to Anne Bridley 5449 3479.
To propose bird observing excursions please contact Kerrie Norris 5447 8017.

Front cover photo?...see page 2.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club

Vol. 30, No. 5, June 2009

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles. Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.

Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editor's Note
For the second month in a row, I need say nothing. The magazine is full of great field natty observations and articles. It was a pleasure to put this together. Apologies to Lynda Chambers who kindly supplied a summary of her talk, we will have in next month's edition.

Front Page Illustration – Photographer: Peter Goddard
A number of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos caused great excitement amongst the district's bird watchers in early May. This group was photographed at Sedgwick where they stayed for a day. See also under observations on page 4,5 and article on page 8.

Short notices

June General Meeting – Preview

Phil Dyson, who currently works for the North Central Catchment Management Authority will give a talk entitled:
'The evolution of the Avon-Richardson Catchment - rocks, rivers, lakes and wetlands'

Outline:
Phil Dyson presents a story of the Avon-Richardson catchment that has been fashioned by violent rivers, inundation by oceans and aridity following the ice ages. Phil explores how the legacy of yesterday has shaped the natural world of today. The North Central Catchment Management Authority has identified environmental assets in this area and is working to protect these. Phil will also present some information about how this may be achieved.

New Club Project – Great Dividing Trail flora and fauna mapping

Following a request from the Great Dividing Trail Association, some excursions will be run to map flora and fauna and other natural history features along the Bendigo section of the Great Dividing Trail.

The GDT, known as the Leanganook Track between Bendigo and Castlemaine, starts at the Bendigo Railway Station, runs south through Salomon Gully and Diamond Hill, past Sandhurst Reservoir and then along the base of the Big Hill Range.

Natural history information will be made available to users of the GDT and others interested in the flora and fauna of the area.

It is intended that there will be a series of half day excursions along various sections of the trail between Bendigo and the Big Hill Range. All club members are invited to come along and exercise their natural history skills as well as learning more about what is in our local bush.

The first excursion will be on July 11th. See back page for further details.

More Committee members needed

If willing to participate in the running of the Club, please contact Anne Bridley (5449 3479) or Glenise Moors (54396254) for more information. Especially younger members are encouraged to get involved.

The very special Grampians Bitter Pea

by Brendan Nugent

Daviesia laevis is a beautiful large shrub to small tree, endemic to a small area in central western Victoria, with only a few small populations in the Grampians, a population at Mt Langi Ghiran and now, one plant has been found at Mt. Cole. It is spectacular in flower, producing large amounts of 'egg and bacon' fabaceous flowers on the apices with some plants over three metres tall. It is an important understorey shrub with the Mt Langi Ghiran population, that I am studying, subjected to significant physical damage and seed predation by birds, contributing to a very small soil seed bank for this obligate re-seeding species. The situation facing this species is rather critical and I would appreciate immensely any help in raising its profile, particularly among your members who spend time around the Mt Cole area, since this is potential habitat for the Grampians Bitter Pea, and the plant is very conspicuous during flowering in October – November.

If you any ideas about how we can raise this species' profile, or want to get in touch with Brendan, who is a student at Melbourne University, his mailing address is 6 Millson Court, Pascoe Vale 3044, and e-mail address: b,nugent@ugrad.unimelb.edu.au

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BFNC General Meeting 13.5.2009
Observations

recorded by Jan Orr

Glenise Moors
This year, there is a marked reduction in the numbers of Flame Robins that have returned to the Sedgwick/ Harcourt North Flame Robin study site. Numbers are down to a third of what they were in previous years. Also in the past during April/May the Flame Robin brown birds have greatly out numbered the red birds. This year the proportion is closer to 50/50. is this a result of the Kinglake and Marysville fires?

Maurie Lewis
He used to keep racing pigeons and he noticed that the sex of the hatchlings was influenced by temperature. Was the change in the Flame Robins due to the extreme temperatures of last summer?

Bruce Mainka
In early May, many Eastern Grey Kangaroos were seen at Break o' Day Hill, Bendigo. There was also an Echidna and two Wedge-tailed Eagles.

Joy Clusker
On April 30, 2009, she walked from Mt Alexander to Springs Rd. Sedgwick and saw the following birds: Peregrine Falcon, Little Eagle, Whistling Kite, Brown Goshawk, Dusky Woodswallow, Yellow-tufted Honey-eater, Scarlet Robin, Grey Shrike-thrush, Magpie, Superb Fairy Wrens, Spotted Pardalote, Red Wattlebird, Galah, Little Corella, Grey Fantail, Grey Butcherbird, Chestnut-rumped Thornbill? (Joy's query, it may have been a Buff-rumped Thornbill).

Annette Mouat
While waiting for a train at Riddell's Creek Station, Andrew Mouat watched a crow (Raven) dealing with a packet of potato chips dropped on the platform. The crow removed a chip, flew to the ballast stones near the train rails, dropped the chips between the stones. It moved pieces of stone to cover the chip so that a raised pile of stones covered the chip. The crow repeated these actions until someone chased it off. It then took another chip to the bark below plants at the back of the platform and buried it under mulch making a small pile of bark mulch. It seemed like the crow was concealing chips to eat later and marking the location with a pile of stones or bark.

Elaine Doling
On April 22, at 4:00 pm, when leaving Catholic College in Barkley St 10-12 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos flew overhead in a South-Easterly direction.

Jane Cleary
Following rain on the preceding days there were a great number of honeyeaters feeding in the ironbark, *Eucalyptus tricarpa* at the Botanic gardens at White Hills. This may have been a response to the flow of nectar after the rain.

Matthew Comer
He had a brief sighting of a Swift Parrot at Mandurang on 12.5.2009.

Vanessa Richardson presented a bird list compiled by Anne Bridley on 29.4.2009 for the forest at Woodvale. DSE has since conducted one of their 'fuel reduction' burns in the forest.
Anne didn't find any Swift Parrots but she did find a Crested Bellbird and a Red-capped Robin. Both these ground feeding species were in the northern third of the area. She noticed *Acacia ausfeldii* growing near the southern edge of the forest. She thinks that both the Crested Bellbird and *A. ausfeldii* are on the Victorian Threatened and Endangered list.

There was some Grey Box blossom in and around the northern most gully (the one with the dam). The birds she saw there were:
Eastern Rosella, Musk Lorikeet, Grey Shrike-thrush, Golden Whistler, Grey Fantail, Crested Bellbird, Red-capped Robin, Varied Sitella, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Yellow Thornbill, Weebill, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, Yellow-plumed Honeyeater, Brown-headed

Honeyeater, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Red Wattlebird, Australian Raven, Australian Magpie, Grey Currawong and White-winged Chough.

Anne covered the area between Magpie Gully Track, Jobbes Lane, Woodvale East Track and the eastern boundary of the area to be burnt this year.

For the two weeks prior to the burn, Vanessa heard and saw Crested Bell-birds everyday, however there has been no sign of them since the fire.

And more sightings of the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos

Peter Little reported 13 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos flying over his home in the centre of Bendigo on May 1. John Robinson counted 34 in Tannery Lane near the CFA building on May 19. See also front cover photo and article on page 8.

Bendigo Waste Water Treatment Plant BFNC Autumn Bird Count 13.5.2009

Carried out by Anne Bridley, Glenise Moors, Jane Cleary, Jan Orr and Lisa Cox (Coliban Water Environmental Senior Co-ordinator)

The count was conducted between 9:00am and 11:45am at the five ponds closest to the treatment plant. The weather was cool, with some cloud and a light breeze. Lisa took the group to the new plastic lined saline pond that collects the salty waste water left over from the recycled water treatment process and there were several swans, teal and Hoary-headed Grebe on the pond.

The most numerous birds on the ponds were Australasian Coots, Australasian Shovellers, Grey and Chestnut Teal and Hoary-headed Grebe and a great many Welcome Swallows were flying over the water. The rest of the water birds they saw were:

Black Swan, Silver Gull, Musk Duck, Black Duck, White-eyed Duck, Pink Eared Duck, Little Pied Cormorant, Purple Swamphen, White-faced Heron, Magpie-lark, Black-fronted Dotterel and one solitary Maned or Wood Duck.

The land birds that were either seen or heard were:

Long-billed Corella, Australian Magpie, Crested Pigeon, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Welcome Swallow, Black-shouldered Kite, Starling, Eastern Rosella, Willy Wagtail, Red-rumped Parrots, Grey Butcher Bird, Noisy Miner, Australian Raven, Musk Lorikeet, Grey Currawong, White-winged Chough, Galah, Red-wattlebird, Whistling Kite,White-backed Swallow, Zebra Finch and Goldfinch.

Wallenjoe Rd. Ponds 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

This count was limited to one hour due to the time it took to survey the treatment plant ponds.

On the 1st pond there were:

Black Swan, Hoary-headed Grebe, Masked Lapwing, Black Duck, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Australasian Shoveller, Musk Duck, and domestic geese. A highlight was seeing a water rat hunting for food in the shallow water near the island.

The other birds that were seen or heard near this pond were:

Australian Raven, Straw-neck Ibis, Whistling Kite, Noisy Miner, Red-rumped Parrots, Weebill, Peaceful Dove, Crested Pigeon, Superb Fairy Wren, Red-browed Finch, Grey Fantail, Red Wattlebird and Silvereye.

The group took a short, unsuccessful excursion into the 'badlands' of spiny rush that surrounds May Swamp as they could see an expanse of mud flat from the 1st pond retaining bank. There were many little waders feeding on the mud but they were too distant for any reliable count however these birds were identified:

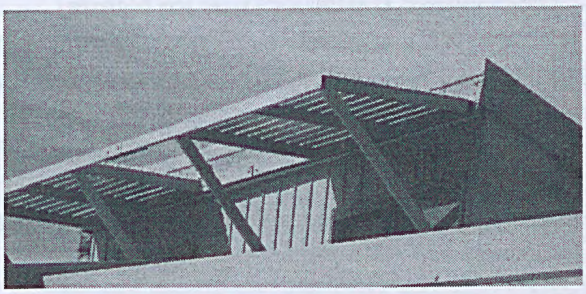
Masked Lapwing, Magpie-Lark, Red-capped Dotterel, Black-fronted Dotterel and Red-kneed Dotterel.

Dem Bones Gonna Rise Again

Author: Thomas Burton

As part of a general clean-up, we asked our gardener/odd jobs man to remove the lichens that had grown upon our roof. When he came down at the end of the job, he told us he had removed "half a sheep" while he was up there.

The dry, sun-bleached bones had been wedged firmly between the slats of the verandahs shading our clerestory windows. Whence had the bones come, and how had they risen to such heights?



The answers are very simple. The bones had been fed to Riley the dog next door, a Jack Russell terrier, now sadly departed. Riley had a lot of competition for those bones from the local ravens, and it was the ravens that had transported the bones to our roof-top, wedged them between the slats, and picked them clean.

We had already known that the ravens used rob Riley and feast on our roof, because we used hear the clatter from up there, and run out to see what was causing it, but when we found our gutters were being blocked by bones, we had to ask Karen to stop feeding bones to Riley, which she did. We did not know then how the ravens had been using the slats to clamp the bones for them.

I am not sure which species of raven did the deed. My impression is that the main species to be seen here in Tannery Lane, Mandurang when Riley walked the earth was the Little Raven *Corvus mellori,* but that the Australian Raven *C. coronoides* now predominates. Whichever species we have about the house at any time, the ravens are always a source of wonder and amusement.

Some months back, we kept finding just outside our orchard the shells of hen eggs that had been stolen from the fowl-pen. Our hens range freely in the orchard during the day, but they cannot venture outside the orchard. There is little doubt that it was ravens that were getting into the pen through the hen-sized doorway and taking the eggs. We don't begrudge the ravens – we have enough for ourselves and our friends, and we admire the ravens so much that they are welcome to the odd egg.

"Odd egg"! One day I found that by mistake a raven had taken the plastic dummy egg that we put into the nest to show the hens where to lay. That raven must have been very disappointed.

Biodiversity Across the Borders conference
19th June 2009

We take great pleasure in inviting you to a significant event: the third one-day Biodiversity Across the Borders conference to be conducted by University of Ballarat, La Trobe University, Deakin University, Victorian University, Melbourne University and Charles Sturt University. The theme for 2009 is "Maintaining biodiversity in the face of current environmental change" and will be held at the Mt. Helen campus of the University of Ballarat .

continued on page 9…

From the Mailbag

by Elaine Mathison

Each month the club receives a number of newsletters and magazines: some by subscription and some in exchange for Whirrakee. These are available from the club library.

THE VICTORIAN NATURALIST(FNCV)
February 2009

- Germination characteristics of Mountain Celery(Aciphylla glacialis) were investigated after the species failed to germinate in the same conditions that other alpine species found favourable.

- Re-discovery of Smoky Mouse near Native Dog Flat in the Alpine National Park: 1996 trapping found one Smoky Mouse in this area. Further attempts were unsuccessful until November 2006 when three of the species were trapped in the same vicinity.

- Spider family richness and habitat complexity: a survey of spiders was conducted at a location in the Yarra Valley over 8 days to assess the relationship between habitat structure and spider family richness. Four habitat types were sampled.

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NB The first 70 volumes (Jan.1884 – April 1954) of *The Victorian Naturalist* are now available on DVD.

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THE BIRD OBSERVER(BOCA)
April 2009

- The Problem with Plastic: many problems arise for birds and other animals from waste plastic bags ; balloons released en masse in celebrations may also cause problems.

- Celebrating 20 years: Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater have been encouraging and supporting preservation of Victoria's bird emblem, a very endangered species.

- Wild Birds: To feed or not to feed? Concerns re effect on bird health and feeding behaviour are being researched.

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Also received recently:

The Geelong Naturalist features an article on the ecology of Port Philip Bay, and another which poses the question "can owls see in the dark?"

Conservation Bulletin (Trust for Nature) outlines Naturescapes – a new approach to conservation – better landscapes with more wildlife;
Also a word from the wise: Don Saunders, 45 years in parks management and environmental protection, on protecting our biodiversity into the future

Plains Wanderer (Echuca BOCA)

Castlemaine Naturalist

The Ballarat Naturalist

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Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos at 'Cavagna Flat' Sedgwick, 10th May, 2009.

by Jennifer and Peter Goddard

The Advertiser of 9th May reported a group of 30 of these birds visiting Crusoe Reservoir to eat the pine nuts. A new noise made us look up on Sunday 10th and there they were, crossing our property about 10am on their way north-east. We've never seen them here before, so we were duly excited and wrote them in our bird book.

Then at about 1.30 they came back and settled, most in a big yellow box on the roadside and five on the tips of an old dead tree on our place. The ones on the dead tree were behaving oddly, and making a noise like kittens mewing – we eventually realised that they were eating pine nuts, just as "advertised"! We have two stone pines, but no fresh cones for lack of water this year, and apart from them, the nearest pine we can think of is over half a kilometre away.

One swooped down from the yellow box to a shrub, then they were all there – there was a noise like gunfire for a minute or two (while we tried to remember just what was there), and then they all went back to the yellow box. They stayed there for a while, mostly just sitting or socialising on the branches, something a bit more active happening at the tips for some. They were all making a rasping noise at this time. The emus beneath were interested, but the cockies paid no attention to them. As best as we could count, there were close to 30 cockatoos present.

At about 2.30 it was suddenly time to move, and they took off toward Mt Alexander, making the raucous "on the wing" noise that had attracted us in the morning. We went and looked where they'd been eating – easy to tell, they're destructive feeders! – they'd chosen bushy needlewood (*Hakea decurrens*) and another unidentified *Hakea* (*laurina*?). Small branches were plucked, seedpods opened and the seeds removed. We also picked up a spent pine cone, quite green.

We loved the sighting, but it made us glad that we never planted the stone pine grove we once contemplated.

Discovery Excursion to Boort

by Diana Collier

On 4th April, some of *Towards Reconciliation* (Oxfam), and friends went to Boort on the invitation of Paul Haw. It was

unfortunate that two Dja Dja Wrung people – with essential commitments at last minute, were unable to attend, as were a few more also committed elsewhere. But two old friends, recently returned from Arnhem Land and two others, one Yorta-Yorta/Baraba-Baraba woman and one Darug man were able to join us.

First we went to Paul and Cathy's home, were we saw a small selection of artefacts (for the Centre). No rocks, stone or quartz occur naturally around Boort as it is on the Loddon silt plains. All the implements in the area have been fashioned from traded-in stone – some still sharp enough to 'shave with' explained Paul. Indeed! There was also an axe head of greenstone traded from Mt William, giving the sharpest axe edge. Nowadays the Loddon Valley Highway is our macadamised route. It was once an important trade route (as were so many of our main highways).

Going along by little Lake Boort, there were thousands of birds over the water, and not so far away was a huge area of stone scatter at Lake Boort, where we looked and found scattered bits of tools, quartz etc. We saw and learnt how to recognise extensive cooking mounds, of which there were many. There are still approximately 500 within 20km of Boort, surely implying a very large population. There were Bora sites also nearby, but we did not have time to visit them.

Mr Godfrey, owner of Boort Station in the 1840s and 50s created a weir to contain the river water in Lake Boort, but by doing so, drowned all the Red Gum trees and caused the creek flowing into the lake to silt up, over which we walked on the powdery material. We walked into an area of scarred trees ...there are more scarred trees in this (one) area, than anywhere else in Australia. One very impressive sight was to see up to SIX scars on the one tree, and the trees lived despite the scars. The bark was used for coolamons, water carriers, possum-skin stretchers (the skin pegged out) and so on. By contrast, the settlers, when stripping off the bark, killed the trees.

We saw how the water was drained from the lake in dry periods; and heard how canoes could skim over grassed, reedy, watery swamps soundlessly. Messages went up and down and along the Loddon and watery region all the time. We learned how food was steamed in their ovens; we saw the clay heat balls and how the cooking mounds were built; how possums were caught by smoking them, forcing them to the tops of the trees, where a hole had been cut and a hand thrust in to grab a possum as it scrambled towards the top.

We held some witchety grubs dug out of roots of a roly-poly ball by Esther Kirby of Kerang, (a roly-poly ball is a prickly ball of twigs, roots, grass, seeds, growing in size as it rolls along, blown by wind or breeze). We were told these grubs would be used today for fish bait. One person had tasted Bardi grubs some time previously after being cooked in the coals and ash of a fire, but found them not as tasty as witchety/wijuti grubs either raw or cooked – in the north of Australia.

A most interesting experience and many thanks are due to Paul Haw for his planning, expertise and explanation as he led us around so much. We ended at Paul and Cathie's home for cups of tea and cake, and arrived back in Bendigo about 5.30pm.

...continued from p 6, Biodiversity Conference

The aim of the conference is to "show case" the ecological work of the above mentioned five universities in regional Victoria and adjacent New South Wales, both to other ecologists and to management agencies. **There are no registration fees**, but morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will be provided thanks to our sponsors.
Please see conference program on page 10. If you would still like to attend please request a registration form (from S. Wilkens, contact details on inside front cover) and return it (via email) on or before 1st June 2009.

Biodiversity Across the Borders 2009

8:00	**Registration** **Venue:** 1870 Founders Theatre	
8:45	***Welcome*** **Prof. Kim Dowling** – Head, School of Science and Engineering, University of Ballarat	
8:50	**Opening of 'Biodiversity across the Borders' conference** **Prof. Wayne Robinson** – Deputy Vice chancellor, University of Ballarat.	
9:00	**Keynote Address** **Professor Roger Jones** Biodiversity under climate change: resilient natural systems need adaptive human systems.	
	Session 1 **CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS** **Venue: 1870 Founders Theatre Chair: Prof. Andrew Bennett**	
9:40	**Prof. Max Finlayson** Rivers and wetlands in the face of global environmental change: an international overview.	
9:55	**Prof. Peter Gell** The sensitivity of wetlands to climate and catchment change: south-eastern Australia.	
10:10	**Prof. John Sherwood** Determining the flow needs of estuaries.	
10:25	**Assoc. Prof. Geoff Wescott** Ecological processes in Victoria: policy priorities for sustaining biodiversity.	
	Morning tea 10:40 – 11:10	
	Session 2	
	FIRE ECOLOGY **Venue: 1870 Founders Theatre Chair: Prof. Martin Westbrooke**	**VEGETATION DYNAMICS** **Venue: Studio Theatre Chair: Prof. Mike Clarke**
11:15	**Dr. Alan York** Ecological burning: the response of heathy woodland communities to an altered fire regime.	**Assoc. Prof. Ian Lunt** Maximising conservation outcomes from passive regeneration of woody plants in agricultural regions.
11:30	**Anne Miehs** Do repeated fires negatively impact on fauna associated with coarse woody debris? A case study from south western Victoria.	**Dr. Patrick Graz** Arid zone vegetation dynamics after a rare flooding event.
11:45	**Luke Kelly** Small mammal response to time since fire and habitat structure in semi-arid environments.	**Thomas James Duff** Vegetation pattern and the environment: the potential for modelling alternative states.
12:00	**Seraphina Cutler** Recovery of foothill forest vegetation after fire suppression activities.	**Shona Arber** The ecological role of shrubs in semi-arid grasslands.
12:15	**Dr. Tina Bell** Fire-plant-soil interactions in Heathy stringybark Woodlands in Victoria.	**Dr. Maria Gibson** The forgotten flora: battle of the bryophytes.

	Lunch & Poster Session 12:30 – 1:50 Union Building	
	Session 3	
	ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT **Venue: 1870 Founders Theatre Chair: Assoc. Prof. Ian Lunt**	**FAUNA AND FAUNAL HABITAT** **Venue: Studio Theatre Chair: Dr. Alan York**
2:00	**Dr. Rik Thwaites** Understanding rural landholder responses to climate change: a social science approach to land management and biodiversity issues.	**Dr. Julian Di Stefano** What is habitat? The effect of sex, diet period and spatial scale.
2:15	**Penelope Greenslade** Can we prevent loss of specialised montane faunas under climate warming? Monitoring and management.	**Dr. Greg Holland** Widespread but not immune: the bush rat in a highly fragmented landscape.
2:30	**Dr. Grant Palmer** Can't see the forest for the trees! Ecological Thinning in Box-Ironbark.	**Dr. Simon Cook** Reptile assemblages in relation to distance to water in an arid landscape.
2:45	**Andrew Warnock** A new weed emerges from drought – controlling *Lachnagrostis filiformis* (Fairy Grass) on dry lakes.	**Heather Gibbs** Climate gradients and breeding in 16 species of common Australian land birds.
3:00	**Cathy Roberts** Ecology of Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*) in the Grampians National Park: interactions with native grazers and woodland vegetation.	**Dr. Fiona Christie** Bird assemblages in a heathy woodland: investigating the effects of time since fire on resource availability.
3:15	**Geoff Heard** Pattern, process and the conservation of the endangered Growling Grass Frog in Melbourne's urbanising landscapes.	**Dr. Merilyn Grey** The habitat preferences of an indigenous despot- the Noisy Miner.
	Afternoon tea 3:30 – 4:00	
	Session 4	
	Panel Discussion: Building resilience into our ecosystem **Venue: 1870 Founders Theatre Chair: Prof. Peter Gell**	
4:00		
4:55	Closure: **Prof. Andrew Bennett**	

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Fauna Study Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meetings

Wednesday, June 10 **7.30pm**
Phil Dyson will talk about the evolution of the Avon-Richardson catchment – its rocks, rivers, lakes and wetlands; see page 3 for details.

Wednesday, July 8 **7.30pm**
Nick Clemann will discuss snake management in Victoria.

Excursions

Saturday, 11 July **9am - 1pm**
Great Dividing Trail flora and fauna mapping. This will be a half-day excursion. Meet at the clubrooms. Bring: binoculars, notebook, late model GPS if you have one, morning tea. Contact Richard Goonan on 0423 418815

Also contact Richard if you have comments, questions or suggestions for any other excursions.

Fauna Group

This group normally meets (in the clubrooms) on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm. New and seasoned Club members most welcome to attend.

Regular Fauna Excursions

Every Friday morning starting at around 9 to 9:30, the Fauna Group inspects nest boxes in the Spring Gully area. The excursions are led by Maurie Lewis, 16 Vains St. Golden Square. Phone 0407 427 179 or 5442 1813. Phone Maurie to confirm exact departure times and location. If you don't phone but go directly to Maurie's house and find nobody at the house between 9 and 9:30, then the excursion is not on.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.

W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals. It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Sustainability and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433.

Activities organized by 'Friends of Kooyoora'

Exploring the Wehla Block 21st June 2009

Indigenous Heritage Day 19th July 2009

For these two activities, meet at 10.30am at the Melville Caves picnic area. BYO picnic lunch

2009 Kooyoora Wildflower Show
18th – 20th September
Rheola Hall
More details closer to the date.

SEANA Spring Camp – Advance Notice

Friday 2nd - Sunday 4th October, 2009
Grampians Retreat & Field Studies Centre
Host: Hamilton Field Naturalists Club
Deposit $100 per person due 31st August
contact: Diane Luhrs 55 723 874 or
Reto Zollinger AH 55 712 544
PO Box 591, Hamilton 3300
email: hamiltonfnc@live.com.au

Australian Plants in the 21st Century

GEELONG 26th September to 2nd October 2009.Interesting talks, excursions and guided tours EVERYONE WELCOME
If you have a passion for native plants, join us in Geelong - We'd love to show you aroundASGAP2009 - Proudly hosted by APS (Australian Plants Society) Victoria

see February *Whirrakee*, or, for even more information go to:
http://asgap2009.apsvic.org.au/ or
http://asgap2009.apsvic.org.au/index.html